Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for creating a message template used for embedding hidden messages, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) determining ~~the~~ a message template performance metric;

(b) determining ~~the~~ a message template geometric configuration comprising:

(i) determining a message template ~~capacity~~ capacity;

(ii) determining a message template area; and

(c) developing a numerical optimization algorithm containing the message template performance metric as a basis for optimization comprising:

i) initializing a current configuration that is randomly selected; and

ii) applying simulated annealing to the current configuration.

2. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein step (a) includes providing ~~the~~ a spatial domain component as a requirement to disperse ones within the message template and providing the frequency domain component as a requirement as to eliminate replicating shifts.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) The method as in claim 1 further comprising the step of storing the optimal message template.

7. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1 further comprising using

$$\boldsymbol{Disp}(\boldsymbol{T})=\sum_{i=1}^{k}\min(\boldsymbol{Tor}(\rho_i,\rho_j),1\leq \boldsymbol{j}\leq \boldsymbol{k},\boldsymbol{j}\neq \boldsymbol{i})$$

as ~~the~~ a spatial domain component.

8. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1 further comprising the step of using

$$\boldsymbol{FDisp}(\boldsymbol{T})=\log_2(|\boldsymbol{A}|)$$

as ~~the~~ a frequency domain component.